

A for Accountability presented by Abdul: October monthly meetings

What is accountability?

Accountability is an **assurance** that an **individual or organization** is evaluated on its performance or behaviour related to something for which it is responsible. The term is related to responsibility but is regarded more from the perspective of oversight.

What is accountability in the workplace?

Accountability in the workplace means that employees take responsibility for both their **performance and business outcomes**. Instead of playing the “**blame game**” when something goes wrong, they step up and take full ownership.

When there's accountability however, the employee is held responsible for successfully **completing the task** or **explaining why they failed to do so**.

Accountability in the workplace is important for all employees, including librarians. Library staff play a crucial role in providing access to information and resources, maintaining library collections, and offering services to the univ. community. Accountability in the workplace for librarians ensures that the library functions effectively, efficiently and in the best interests of its patrons.

Accountability- in respect of the “REACHt “principles at UKZN is a fundamental principle that involves taking responsibility for one's actions, decisions and also their consequences.

It is a quality that individuals, organizations & institutions exhibit when they are answerable for their actions, whether they are positive or negative.

At UKZN, I want to draw your attention to 2 very important positions:

- 1) The VC – Prof. Nana Poku
- 2) & A little Closer to home: Director of Libraries

Prof Poku has his hands full with running the entire University. All decisions & actions taken by him & he’s team affects all facets of the University either positively or negatively.

On the other hand all the actions & decisions taken by our “Mother figure” Dr Nonhlanhla & her team affects the library; library staff & also the entire university community. In both of the above cases each of them is ultimately accountable & answerable for the responsibilities given to them,

The same goes for each & every one of us who are part of the “UKZN LIBRARY FAMILY”

Accountability ensures- transparency, trustworthiness, and integrity in personal and professional conduct.

*I have **listed** a few key aspects of accountability:*

- 1) Responsibility:** Being accountable means recognizing that you are *responsible for your actions* & the outcome that results from those actions. It involves owning up to your mistakes/ERRORS and taking corrective actions when necessary.
- 2) Transparency:** Being transparent and open about your actions and decisions is absolutely essential for accountability. This includes sharing information with relevant stakeholders and being honest about successes and failures.
- 3) Answerability:** Being accountable means being willing to answer questions and provide explanations for your actions and decisions. It involves being accessible to those who have a legitimate interest in your work.
- 4) Consequences:** Accountability is closely linked to consequences. When individuals or entities are held accountable, they may face either *reward for positive actions* or *face consequences for negative ones*.
- 5) Trust and Credibility:** Demonstrating accountability builds trust and credibility with others, whether they are colleagues, clients, partners, or the general public. People are more likely to rely on and respect individuals and also organizations that display accountability.
- 6) Learning and Improvement:** Embracing accountability allows individuals and organizations to learn from their experiences, including both successes and failures.

By acknowledging mistakes and weaknesses, they can identify areas for improvement and make the necessary positive changes.

Accountability is crucial in various aspects of life, including personal relationships, professional work, government and public institutions, also even global issues like environmental conservation & human rights.

I want to also include religion, since in ISLAM AND a few other religions, the belief is that we all are going to be accountable & answerable to our Creator, on the day of judgement, for all our actions in this lifespan on earth.

Without accountability in any organisation, there can be a lack of trust, inefficiencies, and a higher likelihood of unethical behaviour.

On the other hand, fostering a culture of accountability can lead to greater productivity, effectiveness, and ethical behaviour_especially at UKZN & its libraries, including all spheres of life.

Thank you.